

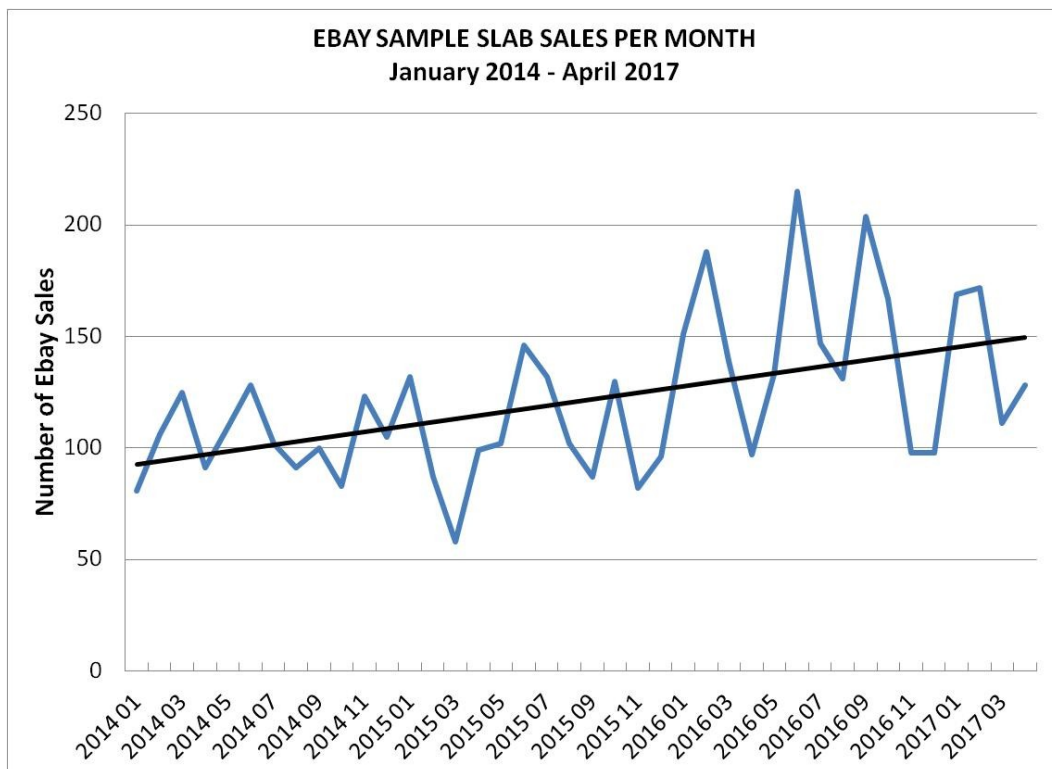
Sample Slab Update #19 – May 2017

The newsletter for sample slab collectors

Market Notes

It feels like sample slab sales are rising. Let's find out if this is true.

The short answer is yes. I have eBay sales data from August 13, 2013 to the present, in which I type sample slab completed sales into a spreadsheet. The data is up to 5,000 records and \$170,000. The months in 2013 showed lower numbers of sales than expected and, in case these months are incomplete, I began the analysis in January 2014. The jagged blue line shows that sample sales varied widely by month, but generally increased over the past 3+ years. Adding the black trendline to the graph makes the upward motion clearer. Overall, more sample slabs sell on eBay every month. Yes, our hobby niche is growing.



Looking at individual sales, the most valuable lot since SSU #18 was a doily 1961-D dime with a RUFFCO sticker that earned \$239.51 on April 24. The RUFFCO and Oak Tree stickers add value and I should analyze how these stickers enhance prices. More importantly, 1961-D is a previously unknown date for a PCGS doily. The market has an unlimited appetite for these lacy labels, and a more typical example with a 1964-D dime and no sticker ended at \$187.77 on May 18.



The most interesting new type was a 2010 Silver Eagle in a custom labeled PCGS promotional holder from United States Rare Coin & Bullion Reserve. This Happy Holidays slab auctioned for \$76.

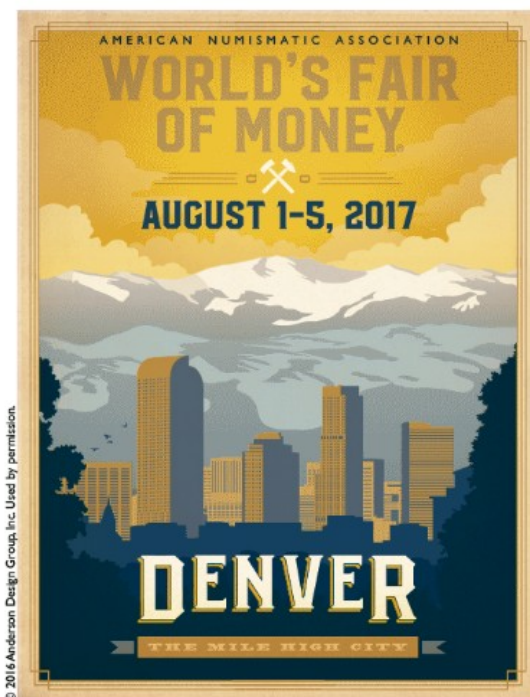
The best cherrypick of the last few weeks has to be the PCGS green label Switzerland ½ franc (PCGS-Sf1/2-3-1) that someone got for a quick \$25 Buy It Now from a seller in Italy on May 18. A better listed example earned \$109.99 two days later.

Although still uncommon, PMG samples appear more often than they did a year ago. They give away samples in small numbers in Baltimore and occasionally at shows in Asia.

Sample Slab Collector Meeting Planned for the Denver ANA in August

I will be at the World's Fair of Money in Denver from midday Tuesday 8/1 to early morning Friday 8/4 and plan to organize a small sample slab collector meeting, following up on Anaheim 2016. It will be in the evening so that sample enthusiasts working at the show can attend after the bourse closes. This will be a modest and informal gathering without an agenda or presentation – only a few collectors talking about our interest.

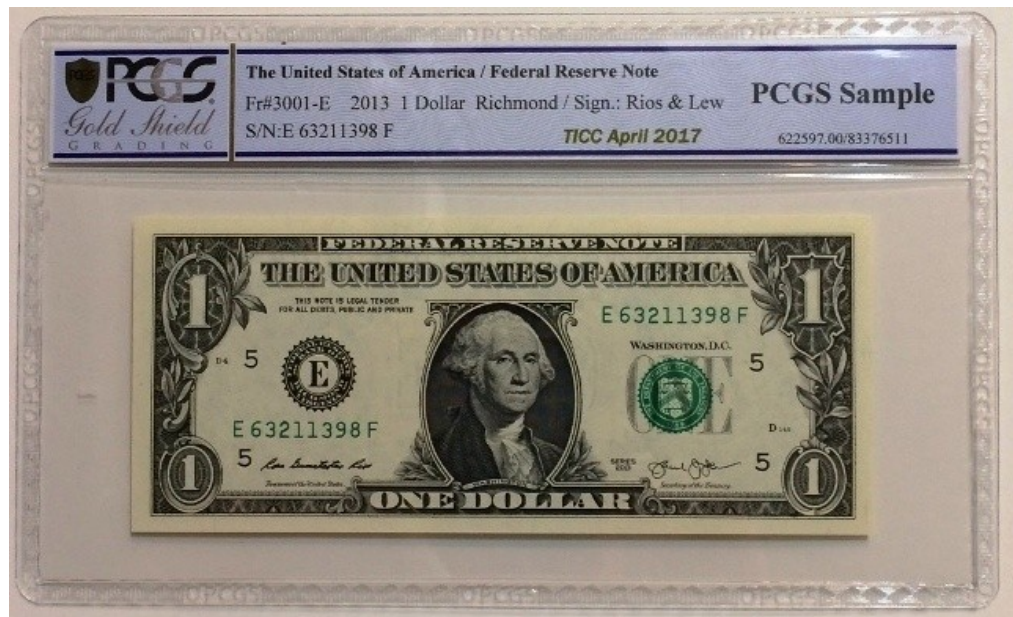
Have you been to the Colorado Convention Center or nearby? Give me advice on where to hold the event. The Anaheim meeting was in the lobby of the convention hotel, which worked well, but I am interested in your guidance for a 2017 meeting spot.



Two New Sample Slab Issuers – CGS UK and PCGS Gold Shield Grading



Does a sample slab have to be labeled “sample?” It helps, but not necessarily. Some well-known samples, such as the desirable Blanchard, have no labeling designating them as samples. A dealer I met at a local coin club picked up this holder from Coin Grading Service UK at a show in Britain. Although labeled like a production slab, the nearly worthless coin and its distribution give this slab claim to being a sample. [CGS UK](#) is still in business under the name [London Coin Grading Service](#).



Clearly labeled PCGS Sample, there is no question about whether this new find falls into the sample category. [PCGS Gold Shield Grading](#) is a new name for PCGS Banknote Grading, a Collectors Universe brand started in 2015. They operate out of the PCGS Hong Kong office. This example came from a dealer who picked it up at the Tokyo International Coin Convention.

A New Error Type – Backwards Holder

Sample slab errors are a lively subset of our hobby, and many collectors (including me) seek out imperfect holders. Some are fairly common, although interesting, such as Denver coins in Philadelphia labeled holders or vice versa. Grading services put great care into their production slabs, but their samples often follow looser standards.

A new type just appeared: a backwards holder. This PCGS Authentic wheat cent sample (PCGS-001-9-3) has the coin and label facing the back of the holder instead of the front. The detail photo shows the molded PCGS logo (the front of the slab) on the same side as the back of the coin. That is, the coin and label are in the holder backwards. This error is not obvious at first, but clear to see once you start looking for them. I sold one in [Sample Slab Update Sale #4](#) for \$29 then decided to keep the second example for myself. Seeing that an Authentic sample with an incorrect date recently went for \$43 on eBay, that price may have been a bargain.



Book News – On Tour

The Upland Coin Club kindly hosted me on April 15, making this the fourth stop on the continuing book tour. San Bernardino is next on July 20. If you belong to a Southern California coin club, let me know what would be a good day to speak at a meeting. I keep it quick and lively – even the people who don't like slabs will like the talk.

Less than half of the print run of Sample Slabs, second edition, remains. Buy it for \$29 with shipping (\$12 for the PDF download) at SampleSlabBook.com or eBay. As always, I also sell the printed book in person for only \$19 check or cash. Find me at the Long Beach Expo on Thursday 6/8 and Saturday 6/10 – send me an email and we can exchange phone numbers or otherwise make arrangements.

Notes from Sample Slab Update Readers

Bob Paul writes,

[Here is a site](#) that I try to supply info for. The list of companies to the right side is a list of (*third-party grading*) companies. I am trying to find one from each.

That site, CoinHelp, has the longest list of third-party graders of which I know and a valuable resource for sample and slab researchers. Very little is known about most of them. For many grading services, we know nothing but their names. –David

Bob D writes,

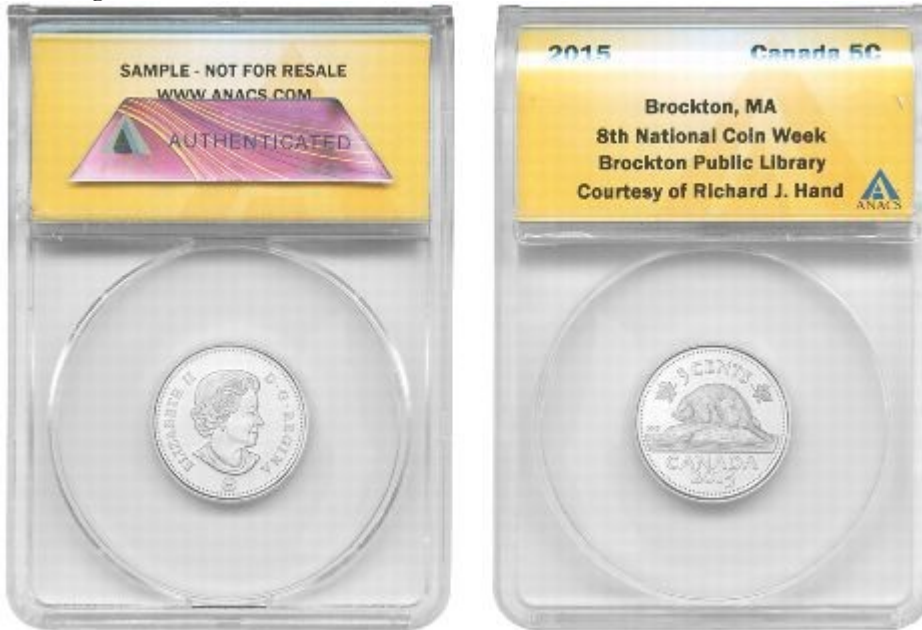
Saw this coin on eBay. Do you know what coin number this would be? I have not seen a dime in this type of holder; only quarters.

That is a PCGS-010-4-1, and it is on page 458 of the second edition. It is a rare slab, and if you bought it, congratulations. In the nearly four years I have been tracking eBay sample sales, this type came up only once before, when two examples sold on the same day, 4/7/15. The price was low because of the duplicate sales, so I listed the catalog value as just \$45. I am glad to see that the market recognized the scarcity this time, with an auction result of \$128.50. About 1,000 PCGS dimes sold in the last four years. Only three were blue labels - the two from 2015 and the one about which you asked. -David



Jeff Starck writes.

I tweeted you earlier today with images of a sample slab I do not see in your book. Not sure if I am overlooking something, but wondered if you had seen that one before, how many there might be and what its value is.



Yes, you found a new unlisted type. I don't know how many exist, but it can't be many.

Recent ANACS club slabs bring about \$15.

Also, I'm glad you found the article (Jeff mentioned [one of my CoinWeek articles](#) in a different tweet) interesting. A compliment from a well known writer like you is meaningful. -David

Follow up: The holder sold on eBay for \$22.88 on 5/19/17.

William Charton writes,

I've just starting collecting sample slabs, and this purchase (from Sale#4) brings my collection from 2 to 8. I did see something on eBay that I thought you may not have seen. Russian coins certified by a Russian company. <http://rngacoin.ru/en/news/SlabirovanievRNGA/> I almost bought one but they were \$80.00.

That is a wild slab – look at the link above. Has anyone held one of these? If they made a sample, I want one. A little work with Google Translate suggests that “slabirovaniev” translates to something like “slab education.” -David

Buying and Selling

Buying

I always need samples from obscure graders such as TruGrade, NuGrade, and Global. I also buy sample collections or quality single pieces. Send me an email at davidschwager@hotmail.com.

Selling

Sample Slab Update Sale #4 was not only the biggest sale yet, but also the most successful, with about 75% of the lots by value sold, mostly in the first weekend. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the "Send Dave to Denver" fund. Some lots remain and you can [see them here](#). Depending on the browser, the spreadsheet may look best as a download instead of viewing online, although both will work.



Very early PCGS rattler 1.2 – one of the first 2,500 – 3,000 made. PCGS enthusiasts know that the first slabs had serial numbers starting with 1080_ __. This is a diagnostic to identify the rare [type 1.0](#) and [type 1.1](#). This present holder is the common (although growing scarcer) [type 1.2](#) rattler. The serial number of 1082694, however, puts

this one at the very early days of PCGS, just after their February 1986 launch. It has wear typical for age. The price is only the value of the enclosed coin, a [1941 10C PCGS PR65 CAC](#). \$185

Coins in the Classroom slab with mintage of 35. Usually held at the annual ANA Summer Seminar, Coins in the Classroom guides teachers on how to use coins in their lessons. Only 35 were given to the educators who attended this 2004 event. Scarce but not expensive. \$29.

To buy either, email me at davidschwager@hotmail.com to verify they are still available, and I will send you an invoice through PayPal. Or, mail me a check for a 5% discount. Free shipping with all orders.



Jim Cauley of Errors and More is a top dealer in sample slabs, both buying and selling. Visit him at the Long Beach Expo, table 1258.



If you would like to place a brief buy or sell ad in the next Sample Slab Update at no charge, please email me.

Sample Slab Update #19 – May 2017 (sent 5/26/17). Published every two months (sometimes sooner) by David Schwager, Fountain Valley, California. davidschwager@hotmail.com. Twitter @SampleSlabBook. Please email me to be added to or removed from the mailing list. Comments and submissions are welcome. See SampleSlabBook.com for past issues.